

# MICHIGAN LEGWORK

DEPARTMENT OF LABOR & ECONOMIC GROWTH

MAY 2006

## DLEG Staff Play Roles in Selection of State's Accessible Voting System

**TWO DEPARTMENT OF LABOR & ECONOMIC GROWTH** staff members played a prominent role in the state of Michigan's recent purchase of voting machines that are accessible to people with disabilities — including sensory, mobility, and learning disabilities.

Under the federal Help America Vote Act (HAVA) of 2002, states must have an accessible voting system in place by the first federal election of 2006.

Bill Milzarski, rights representative with the Michigan Commission on Disability Concerns, and Pat Cannon, director of the Michigan Commission for the Blind, worked with the Office of the Secretary of State in selecting the AutoMARK, which allows voters with disabilities to mark a ballot in the usual way.

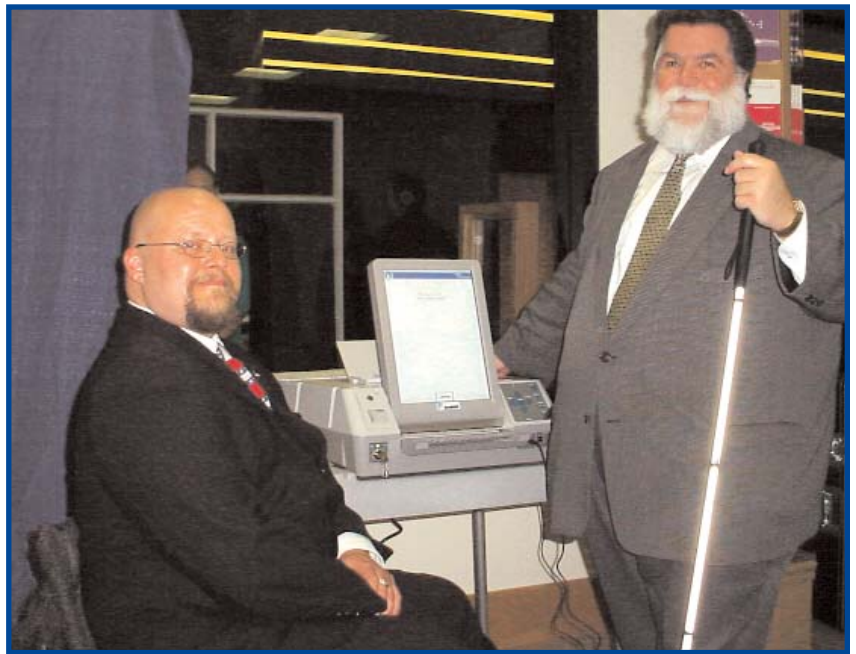
Bill said the AutoMARK was the best machine for Michigan among those considered, cited for its accessibility and ease of use. "For the first time, people with disabilities across Michigan will be able to cast a ballot independently and in privacy."

Bill served as a voting member of the six-person voting machine evaluation committee, and Pat served in an advisory role as the Secretary of State's office sought to obtain input from the disability community as well as from local election officials.

Approximately 4,300 of the AutoMARK voting systems have been purchased. Each of the state's polling locations will have at least one AutoMARK on the premises for the Aug. 8 primary election.

Depending on their needs, voters may cast their votes without assistance using the screen, Braille keypad, or foot pedal. They may also use magnification and contrast features on the screen, headphones with an audio function, a wand, or a personal sip/puff tube to assist in marking the ballot. When the ballot is completed, it is scanned and stored with all other ballots. Voters maintain the privacy of their ballot throughout the process.

"It was my privilege to be on the White House lawn when the President signed the Americans with Disabilities Act into law on July 26, 1990," said Pat Cannon. "He said at the very heart of the ADA was the full integration of people with disabilities into all



Bill Milzarski (left) and Pat Cannon were present at the May 2 news conference announcing the state's purchasing of the AutoMARK. It resembles a fax machine with a large flip-up screen and attachments including headphones.

aspects of society. Until now, too many Americans with disabilities simply could not cast an independent ballot, needing the assistance of others to exercise this most precious, fundamental right. Now, because of the AutoMARK, we are closer to achieving the true promise of the ADA."

## Breaking News!

Just as Michigan LEGwork was "going to press," Governor Jennifer M. Granholm announced that Acting DLEG Director Robert W. Swanson has been appointed director of the Department of Labor & Economic Growth. Please go to <http://www.michigan.gov/gov/> to read the news release announcing the appointment. Our warmest congratulations to Bob Swanson!

# A Message from the Director

The Bureau of Commercial Services' Corporation Division has won several awards for its innovative efforts to make it easier for customers to do business with the state. So it should come as no surprise that the division has been honored once again. The International Association of Commercial Administrators has given the division an award for implementing a more secure credit card processing system to protect Michigan residents. The new system is a joint project of the Departments of Information Technology and Treasury and DLEG. Congratulations to all of those who helped make this initiative such a success!

Congratulations also go to Michigan Rehabilitation Services (MRS). Recent data released by the U.S. Department of Education for fiscal year 2004 show that MRS is doing an exemplary job in comparison with other state vocational rehabilitation (VR) agencies. Of the 56 general VR agencies across the country, Michigan came in fourth with 14.5 persons rehabilitated per MRS employee during FY 2004. I concur with MRS Director Jaye Shamsiddeen, who says she is proud of her top-notch staff who have a strong dedication to the mission of the agency and its customers.

As you may have read on our intranet, the DLEG Leadership Council has adopted a Casual Dress for Charity Day policy. This new policy clarifies how employees in our bureaus and agencies can participate to benefit various charities:

- One day per week can be considered Casual Dress for Charity Day. This can be in addition to casual Friday.
- Bureau/agency directors decide which day of the week is Casual Dress for Charity Day for their employees.
- Bureau/agency directors may direct those employees engaged in regular contact with the public to opt out of participating in Casual Dress for Charity Day.
- Bureaus/agencies will have the option of collecting up to a \$2 donation for employees participating in Casual Dress for Charity Day. The money may be designated for a charity selected and agreed upon in advance by the bureau/agency employees.
- If a bureau/agency decides to select a charity and collect money, both the named charity and the total dollar amount collected should be e-mailed to Linda Cook, Media & Public Relations, at [cookl1@michigan.gov](mailto:cookl1@michigan.gov). The information will be posted on the DLEG intranet and in *Michigan LEGwork*.

In DLEG energy news, Governor Granholm issued an executive directive calling on Peter Lark, chair of the Michigan Public Service Commission, to develop a comprehensive energy plan for the state of Michigan to be presented to the governor by the end of 2006. Earlier this year, the Michigan Public Service Commission had indicated the state will be facing a need for new generation capacity by 2009.

Executive Directive 2006-2 asks for recommendations to ensure the state can reliably meet its growing energy needs and keep electric rates competitive. The plan, when complete, will encourage the use of new technologies to improve energy efficiency, cleanliness, and distribution and will explore ways to continue the growth of the alternative energy industry here in Michigan.

I recently had the opportunity to present grants up to \$8,000 to five Michigan builders on behalf of DLEG's Energy Office to help market energy efficient homes. The Energy Star program, funded by the U.S. Department of Energy, encourages builders and consumers to learn about the most innovative energy efficient products and techniques in home construction. For more information about how you can save money in your home, visit the Energy Office website at [www.michigan.gov/energyoffice](http://www.michigan.gov/energyoffice).

Sadly, we have once again lost one of our staff members. Frank Spano, an unemployment insurance examiner, passed away April 2 after suffering a heart attack. On behalf of the department, I extend heartfelt condolences to Frank's family and friends.

Sincerely,



Robert W. Swanson

## MICHIGAN LEGWORK

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Articles/photos may be e-mailed to [breenl@michigan.gov](mailto:breenl@michigan.gov) or faxed to 517/241-1580. The Department of Labor & Economic Growth is an equal opportunity employer/program. This newsletter will be made available in alternate formats on request.



# Welcome Home, Priscilla

DLEG is happy to welcome home Priscilla Swan, an unemployment insurance examiner, Unemployment Insurance Agency, who has completed a tour of duty in Iraq. She returned to work at the Detroit Remote Initial Claims Center on March 8.

Priscilla has been in the Army National Guard for more than 20 years and is a member of the 1225th Corps Support Battalion as the Battalion Laundry, Shower & Textile Non Commission Officer in Charge out of Detroit.

She was called to active duty in Oct. 2004 and was deployed to Iraq in December of that year. While in Iraq, she held the positions of Fuel Handler and

Supply and Services.

“My responsibilities were overseeing and coordinating with subordinate units on the daily requirements of their missions,” Priscilla said. “In addition, I received reports from the subordinate units to complete my daily reports prior to submitting to Higher Headquarters regarding water, fuel, and transportation movement of supplies and equipment to other commands.”

Priscilla said her deployment to Iraq was “truly an unforgettable experience that has changed me in some ways forever. Patience has now become a way of life.”



Priscilla Swan said “the care packages, e-mails, prayers, and other support were all very much appreciated and well received by fellow soldiers and me.”

# UIA's Frank Spano Passes Away

Frank Joseph Spano, 52, an unemployment insurance (UI) examiner with the Unemployment Insurance Agency, passed away April 2 after suffering a fatal heart attack.

Frank had worked at the Saginaw Remote Initial Claims Center (RICC), but was on a medical leave at the time of his death because of other health issues.

He began his career with the state of Michigan in 1981 as a permanent intermittent employee at the

Michigan Employment Security Commission's office in Caro. He later worked for several years at the Caro Regional Center with the Michigan Department of Mental Health before returning to the UI program and working in Caro, Lapeer, and then the Saginaw RICC.

Frank is survived by his wife, Dorothy, and his mother, Katherine. He will be greatly missed by his friends and co-workers.

# DLEG Has Smart Commuters!

By John Sarver

Tom Martin led his Office of Policy & Legislative Affairs (OPLA)/ Energy Office (EO) staff to a second place finish in Lansing's first annual Smart Commute.

Biking, walking, taking the bus, carpooling, and telecommuting all counted in the May 15–19 competition between Lansing employers. OPLA/EO staff Smart Commuted 53 percent of all trips that week to earn the second place finish in the Small Employer (6–24 employees) category. The Michigan Environmental Council won this category with 54 percent Smart Commutes.

Twenty employers representing about 280 persons competed. The total number of Smart Commutes logged for the Challenge Week exceeded 1,800.

The Mid Michigan Environmental Action Council (Mid-MEAC) sponsored the Smart Commute Week and received a \$6,000 grant from the Energy Office to help plan and organize the event.



Smart Commuters, left to right, are Pat Hudson, Residential Programs manager; Tom Martin, OPLA director; John Sarver, Technical Assistance supervisor; Trista Gregorski, Biomass assistant; Jen Thompson, Green Lodging coordinator; Tim Shireman, Clean Cities coordinator; Tom Krupiarz, State Facilities Program manager; and Megan Ingersoll, Rebuild Michigan assistant.



## 2006 Spirit of DLEG Gears Up

*Editor's Note: This issue of Michigan LEGwork introduces Meg & Reg of DLEG, who enjoy discussing current events in the department.*

**Meg:** Well, it's only a month away.

**Reg:** What's only a month away? The 4th of July?

**Meg:** No, silly, that's OVER a month away. I'm talking about the 2006 Spirit of DLEG competition. We have until Friday, June 30, to turn in a written description of why we believe our bureau or agency should win.

**Reg:** What does a bureau or agency have to do to win?

**Meg:** This year's theme is "inclusion," so the written description should convey how the individual bureau or agency demonstrates this core value in its work. The description — don't make it over two pages — can be about an activity, a project, or a demonstration that has been conducted for the purpose of the competition.

**Reg:** How's the winner chosen?

**Meg:** All of the written entries will be placed on the DLEG intranet on Monday, July 3, so employees can begin voting online. Paper ballots will also be provided for those who don't have access to the intranet. The voting will end on Friday, July 14, and then on the following Monday, the Office of Media Technology will begin developing a video of the top entries for judging by an impartial outside panel.

**Reg:** Wow, you sure know a lot about it. But let's cut to the chase — when do we find out which team has won?

**Meg:** Our department's annual Spirit of DLEG meeting is all set for September 28 at the Lansing M-TEC. That's when the winning team will be announced. Now, please excuse me while I start thinking about my bureau's entry.

**Reg:** Good luck!



Kathleen Fagan



Machele Cardin

The General Industry Safety & Health Division, Michigan Occupational Safety and Health Administration (MIOSHA) is pleased to announce that Safety Officer **Robert Black** has been reallocated to the senior safety officer level. Prior to joining MIOSHA three-and-a-half-years ago, Rob spent more than 30 years in private industry in a variety of positions in the auto and die-casting industries as well as in tool and die. Rob is assigned to Monroe and Washtenaw counties and part of W County. Congratulations, Rob!

Workforce Specialist **Sue Ann Searles** has assumed the role of acting manager of the Department's Advisory Administration Unit while **Marcia Black-Watson** serves as the assistant to Acting Deputy Director **Irma Zuckerberg**. The Advisory Administration Unit provides staff support to the Governor's Council for Labor & Economic Growth.

The Office of Financial and Insurance Services (OFIS) has recently welcomed **Kathleen Fagan** as its new public information officer. Kathy comes to OFIS from Donovan and Smith Marketing & Media, Inc., a Lansing-based public relations firm, where she worked as a senior communications coordinator. Prior to that, she served for seven years as the public relations manager for the Michigan State Housing Development Authority (MSHDA). Kathy is a graduate of Michigan State University.

## People on the Move

The Bureau of Commercial Services has welcomed two new team members. **Machele Cardin** is a department technician with the Builders/Design Boards Unit, Licensing Division, where she is assisting in the review and processing of builders' individual and company applications. Machele most recently worked for the Michigan Department of Agriculture, where she reviewed and processed license applications for harness, thoroughbred, and mixed meet pari-mutuel racing. **Jason Scharer** is a new auditor with the Audit Section, Administrative Services Division. He most recently worked for the Guaranty Association, a division of the Michigan Department of Treasury. Jason graduated from Michigan State University's Honors College in 2004 with a major in accounting.



Jason Scharer

The Michigan Occupational Safety and Health Administration (MIOSHA) has welcomed **Diane Woiron** as the new permanent secretary in District 1 of the General Industry Safety & Health Division. Diane most recently worked for the Michigan Department of Corrections and has 10 years of experience with the state.

**Melodie Alzner**, a construction safety supervisor in the Construction Safety and Health Division, MIOSHA, has left the agency to work in construction safety and health in the private sector. She was with MIOSHA for nearly nine years.

# 'High Spirited' Best Describes DLEG's Bring a Child to Work Day

The Department of Labor & Economic Growth participated in Bring a Child to Work Day on April 27 with high spirits, ingenuity, and a lot of fun.

Each division within the department planned its own activities, demonstrating much creativity on the part of the day's planners. For example, the Michigan Occupational Safety and Health Administration (MIOSHA) included in its itinerary field trips to the State Capitol and to the Michigan Historical Museum, where the children enjoyed a special exhibit called "A Soldier's Life in Michigan."

The children at the Michigan Liquor Control Commission (MLCC) decorated their own cookies. The youngsters at the Battle Creek office of Michigan Rehabilitation Services (MRS) got to sit with rehabilitation counselors to learn what they do in their jobs.

The young participants at the Office of Financial and Insurance Services (OFIS) took a tour of the Hall of Justice in Lansing, and Michigan State Housing Development Authority (MSHDA) youngsters participated in a LEGO house-building contest.

At the Unemployment Insurance Agency (UIA) in Detroit, the children toured various UIA work units at Cadillac Place as well as the State Court of Appeals. However, the highlight was visiting Governor Granholm's 14th floor office and being able to sit at her desk. The Detroit, Saginaw, and Grand Rapids Remote Initial Claims Centers all participated in a distance learning activity.

One common thread among the day's many activities was the annual department-wide art contest. This year's theme was "Shaping Michigan's Future," in which the children were asked to depict what will make Michigan a great place in which to live and work in the 21st century. The June issue of *Michigan LEGwork* will feature the budding artists and their winning artwork.

Please check out the DLEG intranet for photos of the children's artwork as well as photos of the children from various bureaus and agencies who took part in Bring a Child to Work Day.



Pleshette Gadson, Unemployment Insurance Agency, shows Christian Peterson how to set the date on a date stamper. The kids at UIA spent part of the day date stamping unemployment tax forms that employers had sent in.



Diane Rodgers (center) at the Central office of Michigan Rehabilitation Services (MRS) brought in her two daughters, Kiani (left) and Ivanna, to take part in MRS's daylong activities.



Children at the Bureau of Construction Codes and Fire Safety were each given a folder containing pages of projects they could work on. From left to right are Gunnar Waggner, Kian Palmer, Cole Osborn, Calvin Reed, Taylor Ostrander, Ashleigh Babcock, Sadie Bass, and Charles Williams.



Celebrating Bring a Child to Work Day at the Battle Creek office of Michigan Rehabilitation Services were, front row, l. to r.: Cambria Payne, Ayanna Gauna, and LaRon Payne; middle row, Joey Shepard and Denise Shepard; and back row, Vicki Rafferty, Donna E. English, Tammi Tuttle, Nicholas Tuttle, and Zachary Tuttle.



# More Bring a Child to Work Day Photos



Linda Cena, Office of Financial and Insurance Services, leads a team building workshop where the children formed two teams and tried to come up with the names of all 50 states in a certain amount of time. Clockwise from Linda are Christian Ritzler, Brandon Droste, Lesley Schneider, Rebecca Cena, Zak Mroz, Veronica Hill, Angela Cena, and Grant and Alex Hill.



The MIOSHA children took a tour of the Michigan Historical Museum's special exhibit called "A Soldier's Life in Michigan." Front row: Adam Fahrne; middle row, l. to r.: Baylee Pfister, Brand Thelen, Faith VanSteeleand, TaSharry Seay, and Garry Seay; and back row: Brandon Jones, Scott Baldwin, Quinn Pfister, Chantel Dedrick, Rayshom Luckett, and Nick Scott.



The Michigan State Housing Development Authority staff held a LEGO house-building contest for its youngsters. Pictured are front row, l. to r.: Garrett Young and Chadwick Willobee; middle row: Kaila Wineland, Megan Locher, Madison LaPerriere, Seth Benjamin, Brianna Wells, Tristan Wilson, and Brandon Platte; and back row: Amanda Davio, Angela Davio, Joshua Hutchinson, Adrise Steele, and Grant Platte.



The 10 children who spent the day at the Michigan Liquor Control Commission hold the cookies they had just decorated. Left to right, they are Rachel Vrooman, Harrison Bragdon, Tyler Johnson, Candace Martin, Sasha Platte, Emilio Flores, Dylan Straka, Payton Schrader, Christina Tuckey, and Emily Kramer.



Children from various DLEG divisions at the Ottawa Bldg. in Lansing took a tour of the State Capitol. On the front steps are, front row, l. to r.: Sabrina Tram, Christina Kerby, Chase Terwilliger, Marissa Arndt, Dylan Cook, Alex Kamp, and Gage Wickman; middle row: Claire Amin, Jared Smith, Christina Barratt, Rachel Hatt, Alyssa Kerby, and Jordan Wenzlick; and back row: Taylor Barratt.



## Professional Activities



Robert Moore

Congratulations to **Robert E. Moore**, manager of Business Services, Michigan Rehabilitation Services (MRS), who has received a Certificate of Appreciation from the U.S. Department of Education, Rehabilitation Services Administration, for the work he contributed to the 32nd Institute on Rehabilitation Issues (IRI). IRI produces quality training materials and continuing education opportunities for VR professionals to maximize the quality of services available to people with disabilities. The study group of which Robert was a member developed a paper on the VR-business partnership. The document will be published and distributed by November 2006.

Four DLEG staff members who are key players in Michigan's economic revitalization effort were the headliners at an Oakland University conference May 19 focusing on opportunities to help Michigan realize its potential to compete in the global economy. The speakers were **John Czarnecki**, director of program administration, Michigan Economic Development Corporation, the state's primary resource for businesses aspiring to grow in Michigan; **Karen Gagnon**, coordinator of Cool Cities, a key component of Governor Granholm's initiative to create vibrant cities that will attract jobs, people, and economic opportunities to Michigan; **Semone James**, executive director of

the Michigan Land Bank Fast Track Authority, which aims to return blighted, tax-reverted properties to productive and economically viable use; and **Gary Heidel**, director of program policy and market research, Michigan State Housing Development Authority (MSHDA), which creates and preserves decent, affordable housing for Michigan residents. Organized by **Micheal Lohmeier**, a Michigan Tax Tribunal judge, the conference was attended by real estate professionals, assessors, municipality directors, planners, and property owners.



Bob Muladore

Congratulations to **Gloria Keene**, licensing administrator, Bureau of Commercial Services, who received the 2006 Michigan Society of Professional Engineers (MSPE) President's Citation Award. This prestigious award is in recognition of Gloria's outstanding leadership, achievements, and contributions to engineering, professionalism, and MSPE.

Congratulations to **Bob Muladore**, a regulation agent in the Enforcement Division, Bureau of Commercial Services, who has earned a Ph.D. in public affairs and administration from Western Michigan University.

During his coursework, Bob was inducted into the Pi Alpha Alpha National Honor Society for Public Administration, with a grade point average of 3.89. Bob also has a law degree from the Detroit College of Law.



Gloria Keene

## Shorts

The Michigan Liquor Control Commission (LCC) Fun Committee recently challenged the MIOSHA Fun Committee to raise money to purchase phone cards for military troops overseas to be used to call home on Mother's Day. "The race heated up and most of the time the competition was neck and neck, but, in the end, LCC pulled out ahead. The real winners, however, were the troops and the mothers since the combined effort raised almost \$850," said **Katie Benghauser**, MIOSHA



**Carrie Martin**, a secretary at the Michigan Commission for the Blind's central office in Lansing, was on the front page of the *Lansing State Journal* with her mom May 14 for a Mother's Day story. See the complete article on the LSJ website at <http://www.lsj.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20060514/LIFE03/605140337/1002/ARCHIVES>.

Would you like to know where to recycle used eyeglasses? You can do it at the temporary MIOSHA office at the Hollister Building in downtown Lansing. A receptacle is located in **Nancy Lampman's** cubicle in Administration on the second floor. Nancy is accepting eyeglasses and prescription or nonprescription sunglasses on behalf of the Lions Clubs.

The Red Cross blood drive held April 7 at the Ottawa Building, Lansing, took in 77 pints of blood. The next drive is scheduled for June 9. Please contact **Lori Parr** at (517) 373-3489 or [parrl@michigan.gov](mailto:parrl@michigan.gov) for an appointment.



LCC/MIOSHA competition, l. to r.: Amber Sweeney (MIOSHA), Katie Benghauser (MIOSHA), Dana Kamradt (LCC), Susan Broughton (LCC), Arleen Platte (LCC), Chris Volz (LCC), Bonnie Czaika (LCC), and Carolene VanEpps (MIOSHA).

## Nancy Hill's Planning for Child to Work Day Is 'Impeccable'

Congratulations to Nancy Hill, executive secretary in the Bank & Trust Division, Office of Financial and Insurance Services (OFIS), who has been presented with a Special Delivery from the Director.

Nancy was nominated by her supervisor, Peggy Bryson, deputy commissioner, Bank & Trust Division, who wrote: "Nancy Hill coordinated OFIS's Bring Your Child to Work Day activities and produced a wonderful experience for participating children and their parents. The planning process was inclusive and very well organized, plan details were timely communicated, and the plan execution was impeccable. Nancy and her team of volunteers developed an agenda that provided participating children with a fun and, importantly, educational experience."



Nancy Hill (right) is congratulated by OFIS Commissioner Linda Watters.

## Credit Union Calls Patricia Marson 'Most Courteous and Efficient Examiner'

Congratulations to Patricia Marson, information technology (IT) examiner, Credit Union Division, Office of Financial and Insurance Services (OFIS), who has been presented with a Special Delivery from the Director.

Pat was nominated by her supervisor, Brent Moeggenborg, Financial Institutions manager, who wrote that Pat deserved to receive a special delivery to "recognize her for the work she performs and the positive customer feedback." Pat had been highly complimented in this letter from the Teamsters Credit Union: "Enclosed is our reply to the recent IT Examination conducted. Ms. Marson, the examiner, was certainly the most courteous and efficient examiner I have encountered. I would personally like to thank her for the extra time she spent instructing me on proper IT procedures. She is to be commended for the professionalism she displays in representing the Office of Financial and Insurance Services."



Brent Moeggenborg and Patricia Marson with her Special Delivery.

## Norene Lind Expedites Rules That Must Be in Place by July 1

Congratulations to Norene Lind, administrative rules manager, State Office of Administrative Hearings & Rules (SOAHR), who has been presented with a Special Delivery from the Director.

Norene was nominated by Jeannine Benedict, administrative rules specialist, Policy & Legislative Affairs, who wrote: "Norene is responsible for managing the rules process for all State of Michigan agencies, yet she has taken the time to hear our plea to expedite Real Estate Appraiser rules, which must be in place by July 1. Norene is working to help us obtain the necessary approvals so filing can take place by July 1, 2006."



From left to right, Jeannine Benedict; Mike Zimmer, SOAHR deputy director; Norene Lind; Deidre O'Berry, administrative rules analyst, SOAHR; and Peter Plummer, SOAHR director.



# Special Deliveries

## MRS Counselor Joe Skupin Renews 'Trust and Confidence Towards Public Officials'



MRS Clinton Township Site Manager Deb Bouts congratulates Joe Skupin on his Special Delivery.

Congratulations to Joseph Skupin, a rehabilitation counselor at the Clinton Township office of Michigan Rehabilitation Services (MRS), who has been presented with a Special Delivery from the Director.

Joe was nominated by MRS Division III Director Joe Swanson, who wrote: "Mr. Skupin has been praised by his district manager for many accomplishments. They include his excellent performance in his senior counselor district-wide assignments, his small business employment customer placement, his strong performance for achieving and exceeding his goals, but, most of all, based on the letter of appreciation sent by the parent of one of his customers. That

vote of confidence and appreciation speaks to his passion for customer service excellence."

This letter, sent to Deb Bouts, site manager of the Clinton Township MRS office, reads as follows: "You may be aware who, among your employees, is really doing his job beyond the call of duty, so to speak. This letter, however, is just to confirm and bring to your kind attention the exemplary way Mr. Joseph Skupin, one of your vocational counselors, is attending to the needs of my son and to the rest of his clients. I have never met a government employee who is so approachable, accommodating, trustworthy, reliable, and compassionate towards his clients as Mr. Skupin. He is one employee who is a rarity nowadays and revives our usual trust and confidence towards public officials. I pray you won't overlook Mr. Skupin when opportunity for promotion in your site opens up. I'm sure he'll make a very good example to emulate, what with his very exceptional work ethic."

### "Special Delivery from the Director"

I would like to nominate the following staff member to receive a  
"Great Job" acknowledgement from the Director:

Name of Nominee:	Submitted By:
Office/Bureau of Nominee	Job Title of Nominee
Telephone # of Nominator	Office Location of Nominee

The reason I am nominating this person:

Office/Bureau Director:	Date:

**Bureau Directors: Forward to Linda Cook—DLEG Media Office, 4th Floor, Ottawa Building, Lansing  
E-mail: CookL1@Michigan.gov --OR-- FAX: 517-241-1580; Phone: 517-241-0199**

# VISIONS 2006 Demonstrates Latest Technology

By Susan Turney

More than 1,000 people attended the VISIONS 2006 vendor fair at Washtenaw Community College in Ann Arbor on May 10.

Co-sponsored by the Michigan Commission for the Blind (MCB) and the Washtenaw County Library for the Blind and Physically Disabled, the biennial fair featured 90 vendors with assistive technology products for people who are blind or visually impaired. This was the largest such event held in the state of Michigan.

Throughout the day, participants had the opportunity to try out new products, ask questions, and compare items. Food was available for sale from a Michigan Commission for the Blind-licensed food vendor.

MCB State Director Patrick Cannon and LBP Librarian Coordinator Margaret Wolfe welcomed Dr. David Zacks of the University of Michigan Kellogg Eye Center. A retinal specialist, Zacks spoke on "New Frontiers in Vision Research: From the Lab to the Clinic," focusing on age-related macular degeneration and the new research changing the treatment of that disease.

"This event makes it possible to spread the word about products and services that make life easier and more productive for everyone," said Pat Cannon.



VISIONS 2006 gave attendees a chance to try out products like this hand-held electronic magnifier.

## Let the Games Begin ...

The 2005–2006 State Employee Blood Challenge is heating up as departments compete against one another in the new "Let the Games Begin" competition, which began May 15 and runs through Oct. 31.

The competition is based on the percentage of employees per department who donate blood at state of Michigan worksites and/or community blood drives. All state of Michigan departments, branches of government, and agencies have been invited to participate.

Go to <http://www.michigan.gov/bloodchallenge> for a running tally of donations by department.

Here are sites where you can donate blood during the month of June. Remember, every donation can save three lives.

Carson City Regional Correctional Facility: June 6

Detroit – Probations/Chrysler District: June 26

Detroit – Probations/Eastern District: June 9

Eastlake – Oaks Correctional Facility: June 8

Grand Rapids – DEQ: June 5

Grand Rapids – DMB: June 29

Grand Rapids – MDOT: June 8

Ionia – Michigan Training Unit: June 7

Lansing – Capitol Commons Center: June 1

Lansing – G. Mennen Williams Bldg.: June 1

Lansing – Grand Tower: June 6

Lansing – Ottawa Bldg.: June 9

Lansing – Secondary Complex: June 21

Lansing – Transportation Bldg.: June 14

Lapeer – Thumb Correctional Facility: June 16

Muskegon Correctional Facility: June 9

Newberry Correctional Facility: June 27

Saginaw – State Office Bldg.: June 21

Selfridge – ANGB: June 23

Traverse City – Disability Determination Service: June 20

Ypsilanti – Huron Valley Center: June 22





# OFIS Honors Staff for Years of Service

By Kathleen Fagan



Front row, l. to r., Liza Leal, Allie Jones; middle row: Sonya Dungey, Linda Watters, Russ LaCoursier, Marcia Miller, and Kristin Hynes; back row, Brian Sydnor, Richard Lavolette, John Schoonmaker, John Boruta, and Linda Hansen.

Office of Financial & Insurance Services (OFIS) Commissioner Linda A. Watters hosted an Employee Appreciation Reception Wednesday, May 3. The following employees were recognized for years of service:

10 years: Kristin Hynes, Enterprise Monitoring/Insurance Examinations Division, and Elizabeth Leal, Licensing Division.

20 years: Joyce Karr, Market Conduct Division, and Brian Sydnor, Policy Division.

30+ years: Sonya Dungey, Market Conduct Division; Carmelita Holben, Consumer Services Division; Allie Jones, Bank & Trust Division; Russell LaCoursier, Policy Division; Richard Lavolette, Office of Financial Evaluation; Marcia Miller, Enterprise Monitoring/Insurance Examinations Division; Debra Schoner, Consumer Services Division; John Schoonmaker, Policy Division; and Debra Smith, Mortgage Examination & Investigation Section.

In addition, Nancy Hill was recognized for organizing "Bring a Child to Work Day."

## Second Annual 'CompCollege' a Success

By Martha Glaser

Continuing legal education for Workers' Compensation magistrates and Workers' Compensation appellate commissioners is mandated by law. With that requirement in mind, Murray Gorchow and Martha Glaser, chairs of the Board of Magistrates and Appellate Commission, respectively, put together the second annual "CompCollege."

On April 27 and 28, the magistrates and commissioners, joined by mediators with the Workers' Compensation Agency, enjoyed an engaging and

uplifting seminar on judicial opinion writing. Professor Timothy Terrell of Emory University presented nine fast-paced hours of writing skill pointers, interlaced with humor. Afterwards, the 35 participants shared their perspectives in a wide-ranging discussion of issues affecting their dockets and decision-making processes.

Surveys completed by attendees confirmed that CompCollege '06 was a huge success, receiving such comments as "excellent ... informative ... very helpful ... beneficial ... useful ... fantastic ... cogent ... very well done ... a first-class presentation."

## Hitting the Pavement

By Angela Simpson

Twenty-nine Michigan Liquor Control Commission (MLCC) staff members enrolled in the Six Weeks to Wellness program, April 10 to May 15, sponsored by the Department of Civil Service.

The MLCC Fun Committee sponsored luncheon discussions on healthy topics like good foods (fiber is our friend!), tooth brushing and flossing, and stress effects on the body. A massage therapist was

brought in one afternoon offering chair massages, and the Fun Committee gathered funds for phone cards for U.S. troops for Mother's Day.

On May 17, we held a division walk and salad luncheon. The photo features walkers (l. to r., back to front) Nancy King, Steve Cook, Susan Jackson, Pam Wilson, Coral Fish, Trina Wurmnest, Carol Hargrove, Diane Bauman, Anita Fawcett, Jim Jean, Steve Robinson, Kelly Straka, LouAnn Martin, Linda Wood, Nancy Lounsberry, Adele Bancroft, Brenda Whitford, Chris Volz, Claudia Mueller, Dana Kamradt, Susan Broughton, and Bonnie Czaika. The photographer was walker and Fun Committee member Arleen Platte.



# We Get Letters ... and E-mails!

**Yves Hamel**, manager, Veterans Services, North Region, Bureau of Workforce Programs, received the following letter from Colleen Valencic, district manager of Goodwill Industries of Northern Wisconsin and Upper Michigan, Escanaba: "I just would like to take a minute of your time to let you know what a wonderful associate you have working in the Houghton office. **Paul Bertagnoli** has been a wealth of information and has helped my organization and me update our files to attract better candidates for a job opening we currently have. I know Paul mainly works with veterans, but he was covering lunch one day when I stopped in, and he couldn't have been more accommodating. When I went back at a later date, he still graciously and efficiently helped me. It is a pleasure to stop in your Houghton office. I appreciate Paul's help and will rest assured I can count on Paul and the rest of the staff in Houghton should the need arise. The other staff there are very good also, but I can't remember their names."

**Fred Wurtzel**, program administrator, Business Enterprise Program, the Michigan Commission for the Blind's statewide program for cafeteria and food vending entrepreneurs, received this letter from Dusty Schultz, superintendent, Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore in Empire: "Enclosed is our annual report for your vending concession operation within Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore. We have been very pleased with the high quality service the Site Operator, Ken Ellison of White Pine Vending, has provided to the visitors to Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore and we look forward to working with you and him again this year. Thank you for another good year of service."

A client of the Michigan Commission for the Blind (MCB) from Southeast Michigan called MCB's Lansing central office to express his appreciation for Detroit Rehabilitation Instructor **Connie Henshaw**. "When I first went blind, I was stuck in this apartment for three months not knowing what to do. I had given up, and I had terrible depression. My friend told me to call you guys, and I did. That same day I had a cane and I was learning how to use it. Connie gave me the courage to fight, and she saved my life. That is one beautiful person. I am so grateful. I want everybody to know what you guys do."

**Shigeru (Shig) Toda**, a rehabilitation instructor at MCB's Kalamazoo office, received a copy of a letter that one of his clients had sent to Governor Granholm. The client explained that Shig, "a totally blind person, provided a thorough and excellent presentation of many ways in which I, a visually challenged person, will now learn to effectively cope and overcome numerous problems of daily living. The State of Michigan is to be congratulated for recognizing and providing an excellent educational service."

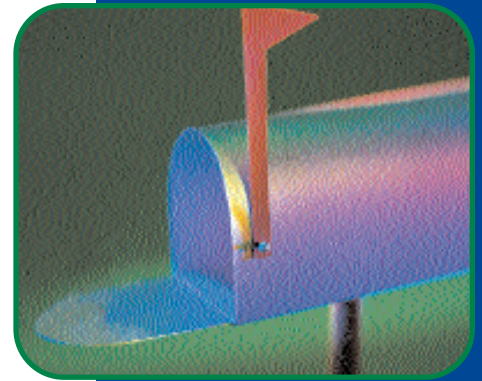
The following letter was sent to the Detroit Mack office, Michigan Rehabilitation Services, complimenting Rehabilitation Counselor Edward Skowronski: "As I stressed on the phone with Mr. Skowronski, my health is failing me and I will not be looking for work. It, however, was fun while it lasted because I did get to work for 10 months at DTE Energy and I finally got my associate's degree at Macomb Community College. Just in passing, I would like to say that **Edward J. Skowronski** is an outstanding asset on your team of counselors. He helped me to get something that I never had: an associate's degree in applied science, and for that I'm very grateful."

**Dianne Bailey**, Testing & Education Section, Bureau of Commercial Services, received an e-mail message from a happy customer, who wrote: "No more questions, just a comment. This is only the second time I have had any type of interaction with you and both times have been a great experience. You respond quickly and professionally. You are a great representative of your department. More importantly, you will change the way people perceive government employees for the positive! Thanks!"

**Karen Flagg**, Licensing Division, Commercial Services, received a note from a satisfied customer, who wrote: "Thank you very much for your help. I really appreciate everything you have done. You have been the most helpful person I have ever worked with."

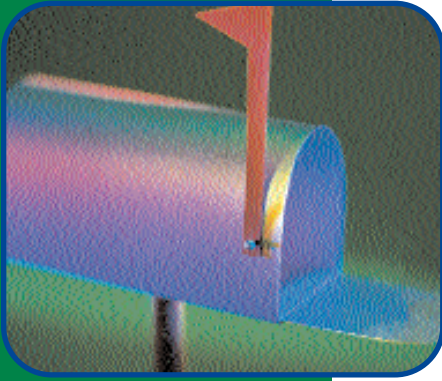
**Colleen Billington and Jennifer Pickard**, Licensing Division, Commercial Services, received kudos from a customer who left this voice mail message: "I called the office for information on how to request a certificate of licensure, and Jennifer and Colleen were very helpful and nice to deal with. They are wonderful assets to the organization."

**Rita Burnett**, Licensing Division, Commercial Services, has received five notes of praise recently from happy customers: (1) "Thank you for responding so quickly. You were very helpful two years ago also. They are lucky to have you." (2) Thank you for making my life just a little bit easier today. Obtaining a license in Texas is very different from Michigan. Your immediate response is most appreciated." (3) "Rita, you made my day! I have been a little frustrated with not getting the info I needed and you answered all of my questions. Thank you, thank you, thank you!" (4) Thank you. I really appreciate all the information you gave. It's exactly what I needed." (5) "I don't remember the last time I ever e-mailed anyone for help and received such a thoughtful, thorough response! I simply had to e-mail you back to say THANK YOU! Your board is very lucky to have someone like you!"





# [More] Letters ... and E-mails!



**Jackie Jernigan**, Licensing Division, Commercial Services, is complimented in three notes of praise sent recently: (1) "I want to place on record that I am thrilled to have been helped by your Ms. Jernigan in 'real time.' (Traditional approaches take days or a week to get by mail.) Such folks like Jackie Jernigan should be transferred to Washington, D.C. — where we need more Jernigans to get our government to go for 'real time' solutions." (2) "It's a pleasure just meeting someone from your department. I really do appreciate your time and the personal touch." (3) "Jackie went far above and beyond the call to help me out. Due to some poor planning on my part, I did not look at the time requirements the Department requires to send out verification of exam scores. Maybe I have had some bad experiences with people in the past, but I did not actually expect anyone to save me from the trouble I had gotten myself into. It is so refreshing to know that there are still people out there like Jackie Jernigan who actually care and want to help people. I had no one but myself to blame for my poor planning; Ms. Jernigan knew this and still went out of her way to help me out. I hope you realize what an exceptional person you have on your staff."

Jeff Baldwin of the Department of History, Arts and Libraries has been working with **Katie Benghauser**, analyst, Michigan Occupational Safety and Health Administration (MIOSHA), on updating the MIOSHA records retention schedule. Jeff stated that he has never had a project of this magnitude go as smoothly as this one has because of the great work of Katie.

The following letter was sent to MIOSHA by Lamar Construction Company, Holland: "Lamar Construction is writing to express their appreciation for **DeWayne Cord** who has completed inspections on their job sites, specifically in the years 2004, 2005, and 2006. DeWayne has been extremely professional and helpful when doing his inspections. He is diligent in making sure that our job sites are safe. He shows great care and concern for the employees' welfare. Lamar Construction would like to express our deep appreciation for the work performed by DeWayne Cord."

Assistant Attorney General Tom Warren wrote the following letter in praise of MIOSHA Senior Safety Officer **Richard Kawucha**: "Richard is the consummate professional and an example of what a safety officer ought to be. Mr. Kawucha approaches his inspections/investigations with an open and objective frame of mind. His reports are unfailingly thorough and detailed. Because he knows his cases so completely, he is never at a loss to explain what he did, or why he reached the conclusions he did. Whether answering questions that I pose to him in an interview or responding to questions at a deposition, Richard chooses his words carefully and communicates with clarity and authority. Richard is a tremendous asset to the Construction Safety & Health Division of MIOSHA. His work brings great credit to the entire division."

On March 23, MIOSHA's **Sherry Scott** gave a presentation to the Michigan Public Risk Management Association (MIPRIMA) at its annual educational conference. Sherry received the following comment from Judith A. Thomson-Torosian, MIPRIMA program chair: "On behalf of Michigan PRIMA, I want to convey our thanks for the time and effort that you gave towards the preparation and offering of your presentation. We distributed evaluation forms and based on the responses that were returned, your presentation was very well received. Planning a presentation and appearing before a group take a lot of time and effort. Please accept our heartfelt thanks."

The plant manager at the Detroit Edge Tool Company sent a letter to MIOSHA noting that **Gerard Noronha**, General Industry Safety and Health Division, was the inspector sent to the facility to investigate a complaint. The letter said, "Gerard came into our facility very professional and extremely helpful. Gerard, through information and advice, helped us to implement changes within our facility. These changes have helped us to decrease the noise exposure in our plant and look closely at other things we can do to ensure the safety of our employees." Gerry's supervisor also received a phone call from the owner of the Certified Products and Supply Company, who said that Gerry was "really super, very helpful, and nice."